

**From:** Sandy Dodson [sandyd@pclink.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, November 10, 2003 3:34 PM  
**To:** adoptionregs@state.gov  
**Cc:** SandyD@pclink.com  
**Subject:** Hague Convention

I support the work of the JCICS in helping craft how the United States may implement the Hague Convention. I support the important work of providing children with nurturing, permanent families. I do not support the blanket endorsement of the Hague Treaty for all countries.

I am an adopting parent of a child from Guatemala. The Hague Treaty assumes or implies that there are reputable, funded government departments which would implement adoption policies. It assumes or implies that birth mothers, their families, and other citizens of Guatemala have resources in place through the private and public sectors to assist them in their parenting. This is not the case in Guatemala and in other developing countries. When children are denied the option of international adoption under the guise that birth mothers can care for them or other Guatemalan families can bring these children into their homes, it literally means children die. Guatemala has no child welfare system which effectively cares for its young. Malnutrition, homelessness, and young kids being murdered in the streets are common.

The United States has its share of children without nurturing permanent families. Malnutrition, homelessness, and violence against youth happen here as well. However, our government has the expertise to at least create a safety net. I would hope a U.S. child could quickly be adopted by a family in another country rather than lingering years in foster care. It is the children, after all, that are our concern.

The Hague Convention champions an ideal. Until a country can provide for its own children, which is a worthy goal, babies, children, and youth need the option and hope of a permanent family through international adoption.

Thank you for the opportunity to add to your discussions.

Sincerely,

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